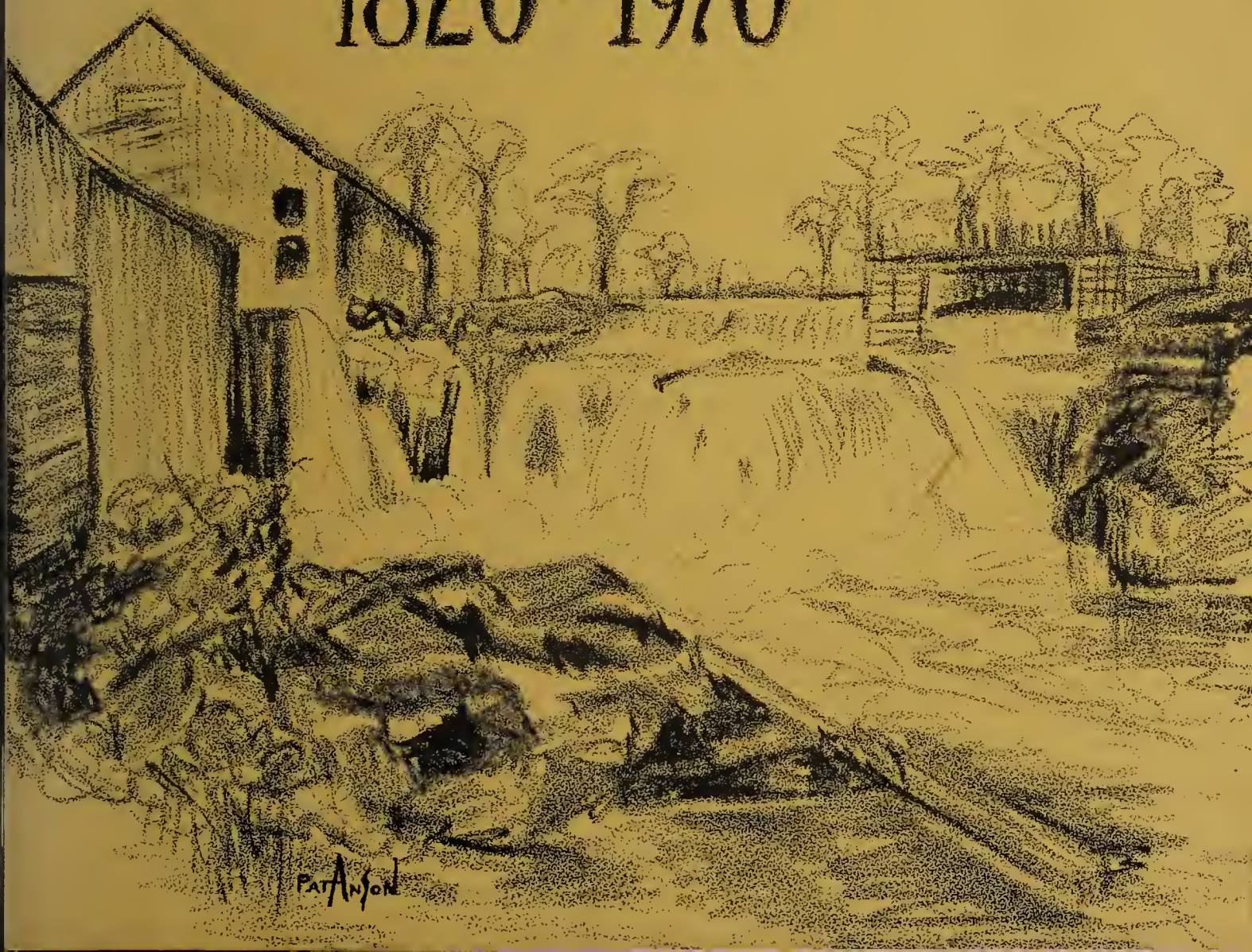


In the
beginning...

WADHAMS

1820 ~ 1970



PAT ANSON

Ethel L. Kozma

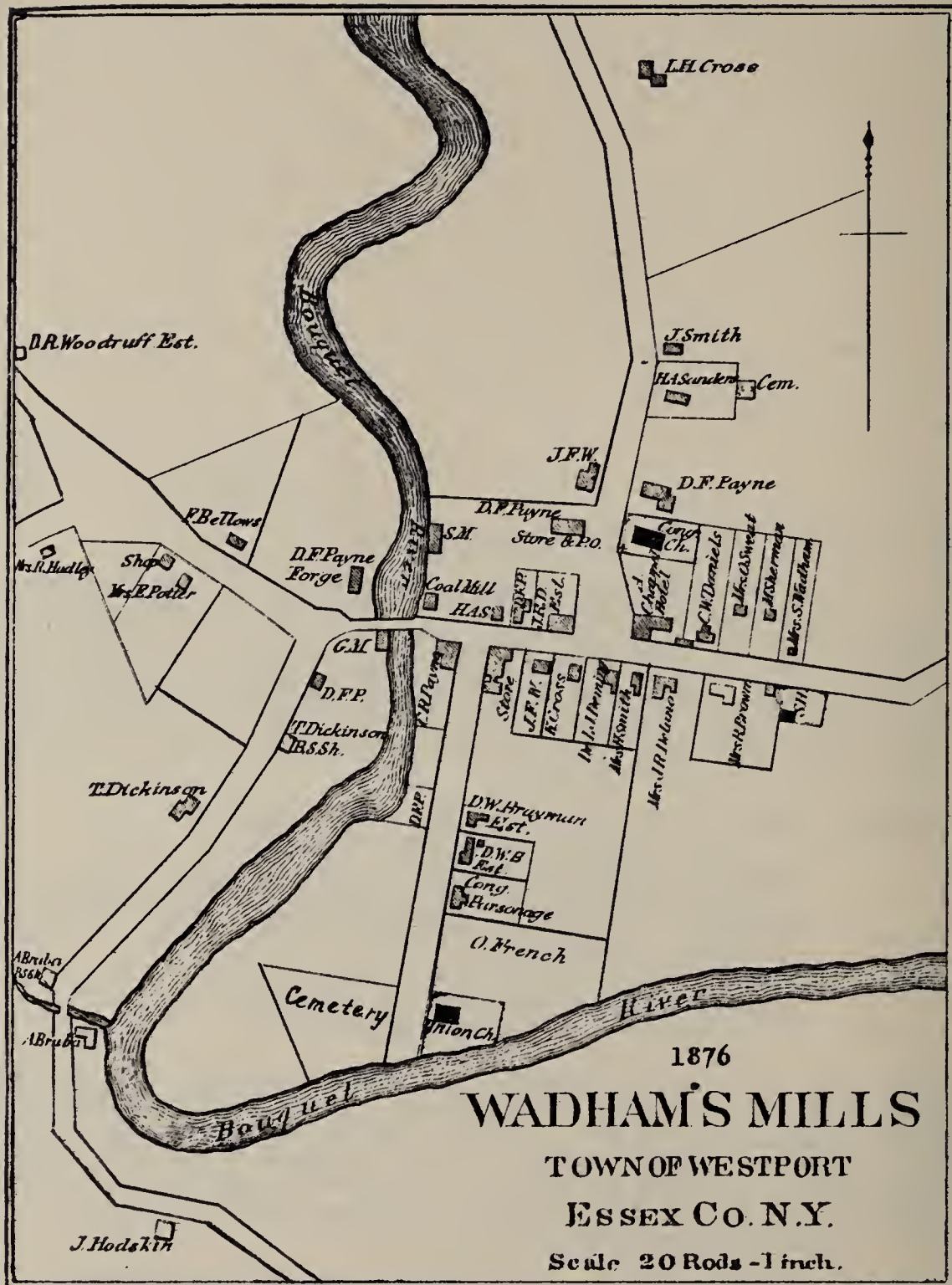
Compiled by Ethel L. Kozma, assisted by: -

Industries, Alma Anson; Postoffice, Francis Pierce and Samuel N. Sayre; Schools, Francis Pierce and Ada Cross; Electric Power, Gordon & Gladys Bigelow; Fire Co. & Cemetery, Fred Sayre; Library, Harriet Sherman and Mildred W. Lewis; Churches, Ethel Kozma; Grange, Georgianna Anson; Other organizations, Ethel Ferris and Lois Lobdell; Hotel, Corlie Dunster; Tourists & Elmwood, Rawson C. West, and Esther Shepardson; Homeport & Frances T. Ladd's papers, Elizabeth Lawrence.

Quotes: Map, New Topographical Atlas of Essex Co., N.Y.
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Valley News, Anniversary issue, March 8, 1962
N.Y. Folklore Quarterly, June 1966

Picture Credits: Arlene Hodgkins, Norma Bertsch, Mary Morhous, Ellen Pierce, Ada Cross, Mabel Sayre, Evelyn Brant, Joseph Kozma, Carl Pierce, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Bigelow, Mrs. Richard Lawrence, Stuart Ludlum, Miriam Whitney White, Raymond Pierce, Mrs. George Cornwright; Postcard photos by Mary E. Whitney; Painting "Church Crossing the River" by Margetta T. Whitney (Clarke) who was sister of Rev. Joel Whitney, 2nd, missionary.

Cover Design and Mechanicals: Mrs. "Pat" Anson



WADHAMS GENEALOGY

The Bouquet River on its journey through the town of Westport, N.Y. seems to have taken on its most attractive features as it comes down from its brief course through the southern part of the Lewis township and winds about among the farms until it reaches the beautiful falls where the village of Wadhams Mills is located. The value of this fall of water seems to have been recognized early in the history of the County for a forge and a grist mill had already been built there and were in ruins when in year 1823, Gen. Luman Wadhams purchased the water privilege and a tract of land bordering it, from Abijah Cheever and others and began to build the grist mill and the saw mill on the site of the ones now standing there.

General Wadhams had been identified with Essex County since 1809 when he came from Charlotte, Vt. and took up his residence in the southern part of the town of Lewis in a house known as the old Phelps Tavern.

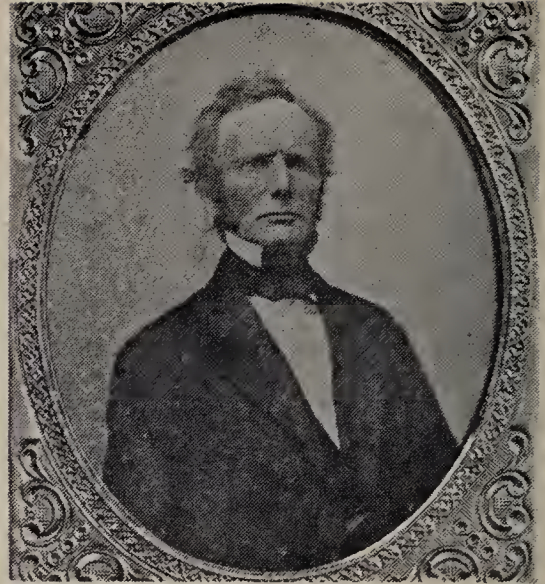
General Wadhams was born in Goshen, Conn., Sept. 17, 1781 and was 6th in descent from John Wadhams who came from Somersetshire, England in 1650 and settled at Weathersfield, Conn. The family had long been of prominence in England, its line of descent being traced from a Saxon who lived there before the time of Wm. the Conqueror. They took their name from their place of residence - Wadhams meaning "home by the ford". Nicholas Wadhams, a philanthropic member of the family, founded Wadham College in Oxford 1609. It was the first Protestant College founded in England after the Reformation.

Both the father and grandfather of General Wadhams took part in Revolutionary War. The military record of Gen. Wadhams is worthy of mention. He was already a Captain in the 37th Regiment of N.Y. State Militia when the War of 1812 began. This regiment was regularly mustered in the U.S. Service and he was promoted to be Major Lt. Col., and then Colonel. In 1821 he was made Brigadier General of Infantry. Major Benjamin Morris, in his official report of the Battle of Plattsburgh, dated Sept. 16, 1814, says "The militia under the command of Majors Sanford and Wadhams, two excellent officers, stood their ground under a number of well directed fires.... Majors Sanford and Wadhams, mentioned above, are entitled to notice for their gallantry and good conduct". (Mr. Henry C. Avery, now residing at Wadhams, is a grandson of Major Sanford)

Gen. Wadhams as a young man moved to Charlotte, Vt. where he met and in 1803 married Lucy Bostwick Prindle, a widow with 3 children. They had 2 daughters and 4 sons one of whom died at less than 1 yr.



General Luman Wadhams
1781 - 1832



William Luman Wadhams
1809 - 1865

When Gen. Wadhams died in 1832, the mill property fell to his two older sons, William Luman and Abraham Edmund. Both these men were attracted to the Pacific Coast by the gold discoveries in 1849. William Luman's two older sons and Abraham's eldest son followed them West and remained there. William Luman and Abraham both came back to stay in 1852. Abraham died very shortly thereafter. William Luman resumed the business which he had pursued previously and added to it other enterprises. After his death in 1865, Mrs. Wadhams sold the mills and store and later the family residence (Elmwood) to Daniel F. Payne who has enlarged the mills and built an additional saw mill on the west side of the river.

The Youngest son of General Wadhams was Edgar Prindle Wadhams who graduated from Middlebury College in 1838, went to the General Theological Seminary in New York and was ordained as a deacon in the Episcopal Church in 1842. Later he became a convert to the Catholic Church. He was connected with the Cathedral in Albany for 25 years, and in 1872 he was made the Bishop of the new Diocese of Ogdensburg.

- From papers prior to 1900

by Frances T. Stevens Ladd



CHILDREN OF WILLIAM LUMAN AND EMALINE L. COLE WADHAMS

(The two oldest, William and Luman, are absent. They settled in the West in the 1850's)
Standing: Amaline Wadhams Burton (the youngest), Frederick E. Wadhams, Frances Wadhams Ormsbee, Albion V. Wadhams. Seated: Harriet Wadhams Stevens (Mother of Mrs. Ladd), Mrs. Wadhams, Samuel Dallas Wadhams, Lucy Wadhams Cady.



WADHAMS MILLS

What is today a small quiet village in the Adirondacks, lacking in any industry, was a busy place in the nineteenth century. This was due to the resources of the soil, forests and mines around the village of Wadhams and the falls on the Bouquet River in Wadhams which provided water power for its industry. Therefore, it is not surprising that Wadhams' industry was centered at the Falls. The first records of activity at Wadhams is in 1802, when Jesse Braman and Aaron Felt came to the area and settled at the falls where they built a grist mill. Felt's wife could run the mill as well as her husband. Little is known about this mill or about a forge built in 1819. These are fairly early structures since the first permanent settlement in the town of Westport (which includes Wadhams) was in 1785 at Barber's Point, and Essex County was not formed until 1799.

Barnabas Myrick built a forge in 1825 and in 1826, he and General Luman Wadhams built a grist mill on the south side of the iron bridge. This was the second grist mill at Wadhams and it served for a century for farmers who brought their grain for grinding. According to Deeds Vol. GG, page 218 (County Clerk's office) the General's son, William Luman Wadhams and his wife, Emeline, transferred Oct. 22, 1849 to Titus M. Mitchell for the sum of three thousand one hundred dollars, the grist mill lot beginning at smooth gray rock marked BM 1825. Mitchell transferred same back to Wm. L. Wadhams, Sept. 27, 1852 (Vol. LL, page 177) this being the period in which Wadhams went west to California by way of the Isthmus of Panama. This mill was acquired by Daniel F. Payne, who enlarged the mill to its final size. To settle the estate of Wm. L. Wadhams (deceased) Vol. 57, page 551, D.F. Payne on Nov. 25, 1865 for the sum of seven thousand dollars purchased not only the brick grist mill but also other parcels past the Union Store; and part of the Forge Lot which had been purchased by Titus Mitchell, Feb. 14, 1848.

Looking East
into town
Route 22

Brick Grist Mill
South of Bridge

Lumber yards
To the north





The mill ceased operation in 1924, when September rains caused the Bouquet River to overflow the bridge and sweep away the machinery and interior operations of the old grist mill. Now, there is a second channel in the river where the mill used to be, and a new bridge has been built.

Sometime before 1826, General Luman Wadhams came to the site which now bears his name and began construction of a saw mill on the water power created by the falls. On May 3, 1826, Barnabas Myrick purchased half-interest in the water power for \$500. In 1876, D.F. Payne built another saw mill. Myrick, Wadhams, and Payne gave employment to large numbers of men in the forests and upon the road hauling logs to the mills and sawed lumber to the wharves. The last of these saw mills remained in operation until 1947 when the sawmill landmark on the west bank of the river was destroyed. (see lower picture, opposite page)

Other forges were built at the falls besides the ones built in 1819 and 1825. Between 1873 and 1875, Payne built two fired forges and by 1885 had built four fired forges. The ore for the forges was brought from Moriah, Ferona and Chateaugay mines. In 1869, Payne started a store which dealt in bloom iron, flour, grain, feed and lumber of all kinds, all products from the Various industries at the falls. In 1872, Gibbs opened a foundry at the bridge. The forges declined as the ore from the mines was used up.

Blacksmiths also played an active part in the pioneering at Wadhams Mills, as is indicated in an 1831 property transfer from Luman Wadhams to Barnabas Myrick and Jesse Braman (Vol. J, page 420) in which the description starts at the grist mill, and mentioned blacksmith shop at east end of bridge over river "Boquette", sawmills, dam, and a site for a coal house. The agreement also included his grindstone for his own business; and drawing water from the upper pond..water sufficient to carry at all times a trip hammer and blow three blacksmith fires; and also in season of plenty, as much water in addition to above, as is necessary for sawing, turning, and boring in carrying on the wagon and sleigh making business.

A "Facing" Mill appears as a long low shed on the west bank of the Bouquet in right foreground of picture on next page (looking east into Wadhams village) Charcoal was made into facing and applied to sand mould before pouring a casting. This facing was also marketed to other companies.

Wadhams has gone through a series of names due to its various mills, the first of which there are no records. It was referred to as Coat's Mills up to 1815, then Braman's Mills and then Wadhams Mills and in 1906 became just Wadhams.



The 1820's through the 1840's were an era of prosperity for Essex County. Lumber interest was on a large scale and kept money in circulation and furnished employment to hundreds of men. Sawmills were built at almost every available point on swift streams as was the case in Wadhams. Villages grew accordingly with increase in manufactures with roads, schools and churches opening. Lumber was in its greatest activity in the 1830's and 1840's and after that began to decline because the most valuable timber was cut off. The effect of this can be seen in the population trend for the town of Westport which includes Wadhams.

1829	1322 population	1855	2041 population
1845	2094	1860	1981
1850	2352	1900	1727

Population reached a peak about the time lumber activity did and then declined. This shows how important a part lumber played in the development of Wadhams and its decline to being a small village without industry. Wadhams has not changed too much since 1876, except to lose her mills, forges, and some of her stores.

Looking north on the west side of the highway, there was much activity besides the milling and iron business. Mr. Payne conducted a general mercantile business in Wadhams Mills, having started the store in 1869, according to H.P. Smith's History of Essex County. C.D. Sprague, also dealt in general merchandise, opening his store in May 1875, the brick store later being the store and Postoffice operated by Carroll M. Sherman, and presently housing Agway, which was preceded by G.L.F. (A.W. Lewis and Son)

H.C. Avery began his mercantile business in 1874, this building now being the home of Wadhams Grange.

The Union Store, as copied from a tintype, was operated by Wadhams family before 1860, as indicated by deed transfers to Payne "west of the highway leading northerly past the Union Store." Present generation will recognize the Union Store as the one and same as



business of Oscar Brown store, complete to windows in the gable, and roof design, this business serving more than a century. However, in a history of Westport as early as 1830, the lumber business was prosperous, which in turn brought custom to the stores, including Myrick and Wadhams at the Falls, and the boat-loads of merchandise from New York began to contain more articles of luxury.

An 1841 Westport newspaper carried an ad at Wadhams Mills, H. & J. Braman having a good selection of Dry Goods for the country trade, and a good assortment of Straw Bonnets, of different qualities. Horace and Jason Braman also wish to let "the well-known Tavern Stand at Wadhams Mills" 1844 advertisement.



Hotel and Store 1831
Corner Addition 1843

SOCIAL DANCE,

—AT—

FARNSWORTH'S HALL, WADHAMS' MILLS,

Tuesday Evening, March 22nd, 1870.

—O-O—

GOOD MUSIC IN ATTENDANCE.

—O-O—

TICKETS, - - - \$2.50.



It was in 1831 that Issac Alden paid five hundred dollars to Luman Wadhams (Vol. K, p. 73) for part of Lot. No. 24 formerly owned by Peter Kimble and John Taylor surveyed by James Cockburn 1800, the property being on the northerly side of road from Whallons Mills to Wadhams Mills, including the tavern house and lot occupied by Jesse Braman in year 1827, with admonition to keep a "Quiet and peaceful population" to Issac Alden who built and operated the Hotel, more recently known as Hodgkins and Sayre. Horace Braman kept it as far back as 1843, and built the addition on the corner, used as a store and harness shop. Other owners included Augier, Braman, David H. Sayre, Joel F. Whitney who sold out in the fall of 1866 to Eli Fransworth. In 1871 Farnsworth sold to Almon Chappel who changed the name from Exchange Hotel to the Chappel House. Issac Hatch was succeeded by D.F. Payne in 1884. Nearly twenty years later the horse shed with upstairs dance hall was moved from rear of Hodgkins Store to its present location as the church parish hall at rear of the Congregational Church. Note the dance ticket of one hundred years ago

CHURCHES

With much settlement and activity in the mills at Wadhams, the need to satisfy the religious desires of the folks at the Falls, was realized with the incorporation of the First Congregational and Presbyterian Society, Jan. 27, 1827, although records show church memberships being received in 1821. Since 1796, this region had formed part of a Methodist Circuit, with the year 1807 being the "first great revival" of the Churches in the Westport township, at a camp meeting on the north shore of Westport Bay.

In 1831, the first class meeting of the M.E. Church was organized at Wadhams Mills with 15 members. From this time on, there was regular preaching at the Falls by the circuit rider. The present building near the cemetery was built as a Union Church 1875, and dedicated 1893 as a M.E. Church. The first Ladies' Aid Society of the M.E. Church dates back 1886, with Mrs. M.J. Southard as one of the charter members.

The Incorporation meeting for forming a Religious Society 1827 convened at the School House near Jesse Braman's, with Deacon Joseph Storrs and D.W. Sturtevant as Moderators of the meeting.

The Incorporation named the following subscribing witnesses: - Ebenezer Newell, Joseph Storrs, John Smith, David Brainard, John Whitney, Francis Hardy, Oliver Barrett, Benjamin Hardy, Samuel Denton, Ara Lewis, Enoch Burbanks, Lemuel Whitney, G.W. Sturtevant, D.W. Sturtevant, Norton Noble, Joseph Hardy, Jason Dunster. It was voted that this society shall be known as "The First Congregational and Presbyterian Society in the Town of Westport, with meeting place at the log school. The first trustees named were: Joseph Storrs, John Whitney, David Brainard, Joseph Hardy, Ara Lewis and Samuel Denton. With Storr's death in March 1827, the vacancy was filled by Luman Wadhams. That summer the trustees, on behalf of the society, called the Rev. Oren Brown, sum of \$350, yearly for 3 years, as his preaching salary.



The property at the top of the hill on which the Congregational Church was erected, was purchased Feb. 17, 1835 from Barnabas Myrick (Vol. N, page 356) for the sum of \$25. for 1/3 acre in northwest corner of Lot. 24, Taylor & Kimble Patent, highway on north side, where line crosses road leading from Wadhams & Myrick Mills, westerly to Elizabethtown, on south side of said road.

It was about 1837 that the Congregational Church at Wadhams was erected, on the Myrick property on the top of the hill on the west side of the river, although January 1835 record books indicate plans for a meeting house, 40' x 35', containing 44 pews and Feb. 9, 1835 the job of putting up the frame of the meeting house was let at \$249. to Jason Braman. The annual meeting, Jan. 1837 convened at the school house, but the Jan. 1, 1838 annual meeting convened at the meeting house (new church).

In those days it seems to have been a rule that the churches should be built on the highest hill-top available, perhaps with an idea of letting their light so shine. However, in the winter of 1865-66, this church was moved to lower ground. The church members coming together with horses and oxen, and chains and screws and all things needful, under the guidance of Harvey White, an ingenious building mover by trade (who 2 yrs. later contracted to build the present Cascade Lake Road, with turning out places). The church moved down the hill and across the river on the ice, to its present location on land owned by J.F. Whitney, the property being the N.W. corner of Joel Whitney's hotel lot; and the S.W. corner of Emeline L. Wadhams' front door yard. (Essex Co. Deeds, Vol. 58, page 368)



The painting of the church crossing the river on the ice was by Marietta T. Whitney Clark, sister of Joel Whitney, missionary. "The boy and dog represented Fred E. Wadhams & his dog Mink", Fred E. being Albion V. Wadhams' younger brother and the youngest of that family. A letter, dated 2/11/1866 to Dan F. Payne from Samuel D. Wadhams, another brother, reads "Skinner writes me that the church was to be moved last week and Sprague said he could get it to the river. If this thaw reaches you and continues long, I am afraid that Mr. Church may get wet if he gets on the ice." In April he again mentions that he is glad that it is where "the Deacon" has so long wanted it, even though his father, Wm. L. Wadhams had died the previous year. Thus, the church at its present site!



Emeline Wadhams' home (left) later D.F. Payne
 Congregational Church (center); Parish Hall (rear)
 Hodgkins' girls' 2-room playhouse (foreground)
 New church fence (efforts of Minnie Whitney)
 Postcard picture after 1901

Parsonage was discussed in Jan. 1842 and committee reported a tax of \$400. on the Society to purchase I. Lock's house and lot. 1865 voted to sell the parsonage property for \$350. with the intention of purchasing another house and lot as a more desirable place. Church records do not record the purchase of the present parsonage, although Melanie Sanders related the story of how her uncle traded homes with the parsonage; thus the present location of the parsonage near the Cemetery, deed of which is recorded at Essex Co. Clerk's office.

In the year 1898, the Congregational Church was beautified by new windows in the church, and the platform furniture was secured.

In 1915, a communion table and chairs and an individual communion service was presented by Commodore and Mrs. Albion V. Wadhams. An 1827 communion service of pewter presented by General Luman Wadhams, was replaced 1895 by a gift from the Ladies' Society.

A Chicken Pie Social, Nov. 28, 1901, initiated the work in the new parish hall, formerly the horse shed with upstairs dance hall, moved from the rear of the S.H. Hodgkins store.

The Spiritual Life of the church has had its ups and downs, as well as financially. The Sunday School was organized Feb. 4, 1828; the missionary society was organized 1878; and reorganized 1894, the charter members of the 1894 Mission Society being Mrs. Nellie Hodgkins Nichols, Mrs. Jennie Hodgkins, Mrs. Jennie Lewis, Miss Gertrude Spear, Mrs. Minnie Lewis Pierce, Mrs. Buelah Philips Redmond; Misses Rosetta and Lucy Livingston, and Mrs. Gretna Wilson. The first Christian Endeavor Society was organized at Wadhams, June 23, 1895, and continued to serve the church and community for nearly half a century, until Youth Fellowship replaced the C.E. The Vacation Bible School was started in Wadhams 1922-23 by the Rev. Elbert Beebe when the D.V.B.S. movement swept the country. Rev. Beebe gathered in the youngsters from Brookfield, and Wadhams and neighboring countryside, climaxing the week with a picnic at the bend of the river - the outstanding picnic feature being the hand-turned ice cream freezer. The county field worker, Mrs. Lillian Stetson, assisted Rev. Thomas A. Williams and other pastors with vacation school work, until Rev. Margaret B. Johnstone came to the field.

June 26, 1938 marked a great step forward in the progress of both the Methodist and the Congregational Churches of Wadhams for it was on that date that union worship of the two churches was consummated, the ministers at that time being Rev. William Morrow, Methodist, and Rev. W. Bertrand Downey, Congregational. Wadhams became a part of the Essex Parish Oct. 3, 1946, including Wadhams United Congregations, Willsboro Congregational, Essex Federated, and Whallonsburg Community, which expired when Rev. Robert Howland and Rev. Margaret B. Johnstone left the parish in 1950, since which time Willsboro and Wadhams have continued the yoked parish.

Other pastors since 1827, not previously mentioned, include Ira Manley, Cyrus Comstock, Noah Thomas, Mr. Lawrence, Daniel Ladd, Lenord Reed, L.R. Woodruff, Charles E. Spooner, J.A. Woodhull, S.M.J. Lord; Henry Lancashire, O.W. Winchester, C. Ransom, W.H. Wolcott, Joseph Clements, J.C. Holbrook, H.K. Panghorn, Cyrenus Ransom, Joel F. Whitney for two years 1881-83 after he had returned from an appointment from the ABCFM to the Micronesian Mission.



The Ladies Mission and Aid Society of Wadhams Mills met with Miss Whitney Thursday afternoon, Nov. 22, 1900. "The afternoon was mostly taken up in arrangements for the picture that Mr. Underwood was to take of the ladies."

Standing, left to right: Miss Pratt, Miss Pratt, Minnie Whitney, Mrs. Clarence Underwood, Mrs. Loukes, Viola Lobdell, Mary Flagg, Ida Woodruff, Nettie Whitney, Lettie Dickinson, May Sherman, Myrtle Loukes (partly hid); Mrs. Edmund Hodgkins, Nellie Hodgkins, Jennie Hodgkins, Mrs. R.W. Eggleston. Standing under the Porch: - Jennie Lewis, Mrs. Marshall Lewis, Mrs. Clayton Sayre, Frank Sweat. Seated, left to right: Mrs. Issac Wood, Mrs. Richard Hodgkins, Mrs. Della Spear, Mrs. Ruby Tomlinson, Mrs. Dave Robb, Mrs. Sykes, Mrs. Emily Whitney, Mrs. Panghorn. (Sam Hodgkins in the right window) at present Kapper homestead.

Sam and Nellie Hodgkins and daughters Hilda, Arlene, and Norma (Bertsch) Besides the store, Sam was Church Clerk through 1897. His wife, Nellie, clerk in 1920, and daughter Norma, Clerk 1970.



More outstanding was Sam's service as Sunday School Supt. for 30 years.

Nellie was in the choir when Mrs. John Cross (Known as "Lill", mother of Raymond Cross) was organist. Later Nellie was organist until Lina Sayre assumed the duties 1910-11.



Mrs. Lina Sayre (center, photo below) served as organist for nearly 50 yrs. She is sister-in-law of Thomas A. Sayre and Mary Morhous.



Tom and Mary Sayre
Joined Cong'l. Church
Oct. 1, 1899, where their
parents, Mr. and Mrs.
Clayton Sayre were active
1880-1920. T.A. Sayre
served as trustee 39 years,
1918-1957, and then Deacon. His
wife, Lucy, was Ladies' Aid
treasurer 28 yrs., followed by
daughter, Katherine Morse, 1954.

Mary Morhous, still in the family
pew Sunday morning worship 1970,
with Elsie Sherman (1904 member)
names the church ladies in 1900.

Albert R. Crawford, George M. Rees, Samuel Lewis, Edward J. Abbott, Albert Dracos, R.E. Danforth, D.C. Kauffman, Aylsworth Bell, Fred W. Grupe, James F. Laughton, Edward C. Wiley, Herbert B. Storey, Clayton A. Pepper, Walter Page, Wilfrid P. Riggs, Albert Kime, Gracia C. Bishop.

History repeats itself with a few faithful families outstanding for 30 or 40 years of service, the Braman and Whitney families 1827 - 1883; Wadhams family name 1827 - 1915; Sanders 1876 - 1930 and Hodgkins, Sayre, Sherman, Lobdell, and many others in the last century.

If accurate records were available for the Methodist Church, Wadhams, such family names as Floyd, Sherman, Norman, Anson, Clark and Cross, would appear in many services to their community.

-Then-
Looking South
Into Wadhams



-Now-
Looking North
Toward Elmwood



LOG SCHOOL - BRICK SCHOOL - STUCCO SCHOOL

Among the early settlers coming to Wadhams, with the building of Mills and industry at the Falls, were distinguished families such as Jesse Braman and Aaron Felt 1804; John Whitney 1808; the Hardy family - 1811; Luman Wadhams - 1823; Jason Dunster - 1820; and Joseph R. DeLano came from Ticonderoga and opened a store and inn in 1829.

It was ~~very shortly afterwards~~ ^{prior to 1827} that a log school house was erected to serve not only as a school, but as a meeting house for prayer. This building was destroyed by fire 1845, charred beams of which remain in the foundation of the home now occupied by the Kozmas. Charles Dunster's grandfather was a trustee of the school district when the log schoolhouse burned, and was consequently in office at the beginning of the construction of the brick school house, which used the bell from the log school.

Mr. Dunster related that in 1838, people having no children were not taxed in supporting schools. Those having children were taxed 2¢ per day for each pupil. By 1845, the law had been changed so that all property holders were forced to support the school of their particular community.

The new school of brick was to be built on land a few rods to the east of the old log school, the land being purchased from Daniel S. French for \$25. The cost of construction and equipment for the brick schoolhouse totaled the sum \$491.61, some of the items including foundation and cellar let for \$216.60; Purchase of Bricks \$76.80; School Seats and Labor \$60.50; Lock for school house, \$1.50. The size was 34 ft. by 29 ft. The entry was 13 ft. by 9 ft.

Bricks were delivered for \$3. per M. They were burned at the old brick yard near the John Dickinson house By Thomas Hadley (now Cowin home). Early maps indicate a clay bank in that vicinity, from which clay bricks were made about 1832 with which to build the brick homes, more recently owned by Brandon Brant, Harold Pierce and Arlene Hodgkins. (1970)

At the time the brick school was constructed, there were 14 weeks of school in the summer and 14 weeks of school in the winter, thus allowing the pupils sufficient time to help their parents in planting and harvesting seasons. In the early days, it was customary to have a woman teacher in the early winter sessions, later to be replaced by a man who could handle the tough boys who were sometimes 20 or 21 years of age, having nothing especially to do but to attend school and "raise cane". Then in the spring, after the



Brick School
1846



Stucco School
1923

school had been pretty well tamed down, the woman teacher would resume her position. The late Etna Bradford Sherman, who taught in the brick schoolhouse about 1895, received as low as \$1.50 per week besides her room and board from various families in the community as remuneration for services rendered. She considered that to be very good pay at that time. Mr. James Rice of Whallonsburg (extreme right, back row) was also a teacher about 1895 at the Brick Schoolhouse at Wadhams Mills, N.Y.

When the brick schoolhouse was completed in 1846, the same bell was placed in the belfry. In 1923, this old brick school, having served the community for seventy-seven years, was torn down and replaced by a modernly equipped stucco school building, with elec. lights, furnace, flush toilets, etc. The old bell and its treasured memories of the log school days and those connected with the brick structure, was then placed on the new school where it remained until the Wadhams District ~~closed~~ its school in 1946 ~~and~~ ¹⁹⁴² from that time sent all children to the Westport school, with which it had previously centralized.

(Editor's Note: At one time, a "select" school was held upstairs in the brick store, among the pupils being Kate North Sayre)

EARLY HOMESTEADS

Wadhams, Whitney, Hardy, Braman, and Payne are all family names still familiar to the present generation, even though the pioneers of the small hamlet of Wadhams.

General Luman Wadhams apparently owned much of the present site of Wadhams (No. 24 of the Kimball and Taylor patent)

Early deed transfers from Luman Wadhams to Barnabas Myrick, Joel Finney, Asa Durfey, Chauncey Fuller, Phineas Durfey, C.B. Hatch, Jesse Braman, Amos Lock, Cyrenus Payne, 1823-1829 are included in the above patent, as well as McCormick Patent, surveyed 1819.

Following much research, it has been difficult to establish which home may be the older Braman home, now occupied by Asahel Ferris, Mrs. Thurman Pierce or Mrs. Grace Braman. The "tavern house" occupied by Braman 1827 was on the site now occupied by Sayre's store. Jesse Braman who came to the Falls in 1803-04, was Captain in the War of 1812, and died 1862 at the age of 86. Daniel W. Braman was a business man at Wadhams Mills and Supervisor for a 2-year term. Dr. Jesse Braman was a practicing physician in town, and is more familiar than Henry, James, or Jason Braman.

The Hardy family also came to the banks of the Bouquet about 1811. They settled a mile or so below the Falls at the most southern bend in the river, Francis building on the west shore and Benjamin on the east. This land remained in the family, and their heirs of the Hardy and Harvey Sherman families until recent years. The original home has been replaced by a later homestead on the east bank (the Fred and Norma Bertsch summer home), while the original home, the former Roy Sherman homestead, on the west bank is now the property of the Natural Beauty Fence.

John Whitney came from Vermont in 1808 or 1810 to choose his farm about a mile above the Falls on the east side of the river, this having been destroyed by fire in ~~1901~~, on the Fred Kapper property. Other Whitney families settled in the village, and also farther up the river on the east side, where the "Whitney House - 1807", is a preserved historical landmark with neat sign at the former Frederick B. White home, now visited each summer by the Louis and Norbert Koenig families, girls' mother having been Miriam Whitney White. The nineteenth century activities in Wadhams included Joel Whitney, Minerva Smith Whitney, Lucius Whitney, Benjamin Whitney, John Whitney and his wife Elizabeth, Lemuel Whitney, Thankful Whitney and others. Lucius Whitney, grandfather of Miriam White, was an ardent Democrat in a county predominately Republican. He was not as puritanical as his cousin, Joel, and other relatives



Lucius Whitney
1804 - 1884



Whitney Homestead
1807

in their ideas of theology. "Grandpa" didn't object to church suppers and sociables, but complained "Half of them attending, think they're serving the Lord by buying a 25¢ ticket and stuffing themselves on 50¢ worth of food, but they never contribute in any other way to the church."

As a young man, "Lute" Whitney vigorously opposed the Delaware and Hudson Railroad being built north from Albany to the Canadian border. In later years, he recalled that thrilling event. "I didn't want rails and tracks ruining our good farm land, or smoke from the engines poisoning our pure air; but I have lived to eat my words. We can ship hay and grain to New York now. It's easier to get herds of cattle to Albany. We used to foller the herds on foot all the way down there."

Many a picture in town holds a history beyond our memory. The former Livingston farm (now Dwight Anson, Sr.) home dates back to a survey and map of said patent made by Thomas Stower July 12, 1819 on the northerly side of the road leading from Wadhams Mills to Pleasant Valley (Elizabethtown) by way of Brainard Forge on the Black River.

(Exterior and Interior pictures on next page)



Wadhams and Payne seem almost synonymous in Wadhams history . . . the first families of Wadhams founding the community with its mills and industry, and by 1839 Cyrenus Rockwell Payne came to Wadhams Mills from Brookfield where his father, Joseph Payne, had settled in 1807. According to "Bessboro" he opened a shop and afterwards built a brick house by the bridge. Daniel F. Payne had always lived in Wadhams, carrying on the Mills, forges, and lumber business, which he purchased in 1865.

The Wadhams geneology may be traced from General Luman Wadhams and his wife Lucy (Botswick) Prindle to one of their sons, William Luman Wadhams (better known as "Deacon Wadhams") who married Emeline Cole, They were the owners of the homestead on the north side of the Congregational Church, later owned by D.F. Payne, and operated as the "Elmwood" by Miss Rosetta Livingston. Mr. & Mrs. Sanford Shepardson, Sr. purchased the Elmwood in 1955 and operated the Elmwood as a Nursing Home until January 1968. Dr. Charles Payne was a practicing physician in the twentieth century, and lived in the large house next to the store (the 1970 Gordon Bigelow home).

Elmwood

Rawson C. West of Reber contributed an interesting memoir as follows: - By the roadside in front of the Elmwood are two stone hitching posts, a relic of horse and buggy days. There is also a stepping stone of the same kind of rock, this stone being used to dismount from the high buggies. These posts came from a quarry on Willsboro Point, the only place where this kind of stone is found. The quarry was



RESIDENCE OF WILLIAM LUMAN WADHAMS, WADHAMS, N. Y.
Now occupied by David M. Payne

in operation before the Civil War, so the old posts are quite an antique. Stone from this quarry was used to build the piers for the Brooklyn Bridge, and the breakwater at Burlington Harbor. At one time as many as 200 men were employed at the quarry, but the demand for this kind of stone ran out, and today the quarry is grown up to cedar trees on the Clark farm.

General Luman Wadhams undoubtedly lived in the home north of Union Store, this being the present home of the Gordon Bigelow family, with additions and remodeling since the days of "its big silvery hand-hewn shingles going clear to the ground." According to Mrs. Ladd, this house may date to 1832 or earlier, although property deed was not recorded until Dec. 13, 1834. It was also known as



1844



1970

the Monastery where son Edgar (Later a Bishop) and his friend Walworth occupied three rooms of his widowed mother's home the winter 1844-45, keeping up the discipline of a monastic life as far as possible. It is interesting to compare the original home of the General, with additions or renovations in the background of the Union Store picture, or the present residence today.

"Homeport" was the summer home of the late Albion V. Wadhams, a younger son of William Luman Wadhams, and a grandson of the General. Albion was graduated from U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. 1868. His cruise took him to China, an encounter with the Koreans; and later an instructor at the Naval Academy. He retired June 30, 1907 with the rank of Commodore after 43 years service. Mr. and Mrs. A.V. Wadhams had come to "Homeport" about 1896, which became the home of Mrs. Frances T. Ladd in Sept. 1926. This home was originally built by Levi H. Cross as indicated on the 1876 map.





Excerpts from "A Summer Paradise"
Deleware and Hudson Railroad and Connections
(An illustrated, descriptive Guide to the Delightful & Healthful
Resorts reached by the Deleware & Hudson R.R. 1905

WADHAMS MILLS, N.Y.

Altitude, 310 ft. 131 miles from Albany. Fare \$3.93

Stage daily, except Sunday, to the village (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ mi., fare 50¢)

PRIVATE RESIDENCE - Mrs. A.P. Deming, Proprietress. 1 mile from station. Accomodates 6; adults \$7. per week; children, \$4.

FARM HOUSE - Mrs. Frank Tomlinson, Proprietress. 3/4 mi. Accomodates 4; \$ 7. per week.

HILL VIEW COTTAGE - Chas. B. Sayre, Wadhams Mills, Essex Co., N.Y. Accomodates 12; \$5. to \$7. per wk; pure mt. spring water.

FARM HOUSE - Mrs. A.L. Phinney, Prop'tress. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles fr. station. Accomodates 7; livery; fine drives; no mosquitoes.

FURNISHED COTTAGE - B.H. Tormey, Prop. 1 mi. from station, on Bouquet River. Ideal summer home; good autumn shooting.

SUNNY SIDE COTTAGE - W.J. Lewis, Prop. 3 miles from station. Accomodates 10. Terms \$1. per day; good hunting & fishing.

(Two more listed, which apparently are Lewis P.O. using Wadhams R.R. Depot - MOUNTAIN VIEW COTTAGE - W.W. Woodruff
PLEASANT VIEW FARM - Mrs. A.E. Hyde

WADHAMS POSTOFFICE

There had been one postoffice in the town of Westport at Northwest Bay, but the village at the Falls on the Bouquet River had reached the size and importance which demanded, and received a postoffice of its own. The official title of Wadhams Mills was chosen, after the millowner, who had settled in Wadhams the previous year. The document which established this postoffice at Wadhams Mills, appointing Gen. Luman Wadhams as first postmaster, was dated Feb. 25, 1823 (in possession of his granddaughter, 1902, quote "Bessboro") although the National Archives and Record Service, Washington, D.C. lists Luman Wadhams' appointment as March 2, 1826. "Wadhams Mills" was officially changed to "Wadhams" in 1906. The honor of advancement to a third class postoffice, came July 1, 1958, more than 135 years after the original establishment.

The early appointments in this office, besides General Wadhams, were Diodorus S. Holcomb who took the oath of office 1832; William L. Wadhams 1838, succeeded by Joseph Delano 1841, Wm. L. Wadhams returning to postmaster 1845, and Delano, again in 1849. Dr. Asa P. Hammond was appointed 1853; James W. Bowman 1857; Wm. L. Wadhams 1860, succeeded by Daniel W. Braman 1861. Ansell C. Hall officiated 1865 to 1870 at which time Daniel F. Payne took over the postal duties and the postoffice was located in D.F. Payne's store (now Oscar Brown's grocery). Later the postoffice was moved to the home of the next postmaster, Charles Wesley Daniels, 1885 which is the present Charles Bradford home in town. Other appointments include: Ellery J. Sherman 1889; George H. Pierce 1893; Samuel H. Hodgkins 1898; Carroll M. Sherman 1915.

During the history of the local P.O., it had also been located in the Avery store, presently known as Wadhams Grange Hall; as well as the brick house by the river bridge, while Harbor Pierce served as postmaster in the late nineteenth century. He was followed by Samuel Hodgkins who served as postmaster, first at the brick store, now part of Agway, and later in his own grocery store, (more recently the Thomas A. Sayre store which closed in 1961.) Later, Carroll H. Sherman moved the postoffice back across the street to the brick building where he operated a grocery store, with Samuel N. Sayre as grocery clerk and assistant to the postmaster. The Wadhams Postoffice operated in this location for many years until Lee Stanton became postmaster 1936 and acquired the present location in the north end of T.A. Sayre block. During Mr. Stanton's absence in the service of his country, Keeton Lobdell was appointed 1942, and Mrs. Mary Morhous 1943, followed by Lucy Dickerson Sherman 1948, and James F. Ryan 1965.

Wadhams Mills - 1823

Wadhams - March 8, 1906

WADHAMS FREE LIBRARY

The Wadhams Mills Reading Room Association was organized through the efforts of Mary Alice Payne, daughter of D.F. Payne, the object being to further interest in current events, and place the best literature at disposal of all. The first meeting was called Sept. 9, 1895 by Harry Avery, accepting the constitution presented by Dr. C.W. Stevens. The following officers were elected: President - Lemuel Whitney; Librarian - Mary Alice Payne; Executive Committee - S.H. Hodgkins, Orlando Ring, John Woodruff.

A special meeting June 1, 1897 voted to change the name of the Assoc. from Reading Room to Library, to incorporate under the Regents, and three members elected at large to be called trustees.

Wadhams School District contributed \$5. to the Library 1902, and continued same until 1921. A traveling library of 125 books came in 1903 at a cost of \$6. for 6 months. Following the visit of a State Organizer, cataloguing the books 1908, first salary of \$25. a year voted for librarian. Tag days, suppers, socials financed the library until more recent years of food and rummage sales.

During 1915, name was changed to Wadhams Free Library with new charter granted by N.Y. State Regents. E.J. Lobdell was elected treasurer, 1915-1949, succeeded by Mary Morhous to 1967. By 1924, the Westport Town Board pledged \$50. annually, increasing this to \$100. appropriation in 1941.

in 1944, the lot and building were deeded to Wadhams Free Library by the Payne Estate, who had contributed both building and electricity since its inception.

Clinton-Essex Library Service System was formed 1955, to which Wadhams Free Library joined this great asset, making available books from Plattsburg office. Franklin Co. joined system in 1960.

After studying repairs need 1960 for old library, recommendation for new building was made by Anna H. Lobdell, President, and Margaret Boyle, Trustee. The present site was donated by Gordon & Gladys Bigelow, library designed by Curtis Lobdell, contributions of labor and money added to sale of old building for \$500. and a savings account of \$400, from sale of stucco school 1947. By Jan. 1963, cost totaled slightly over \$2700. Books and furniture were moved to new Library in May 1963. With assistance from Westport Central School budget, a permanent charter was granted in 1968, replacing provisional, renewable every five years.

Old Library - small wooden structure, just south of Payne's store on west side of highway in street scene (horse n buggy days)



Library Presidents 1895 - 1970 include: - Lemuel Whitney, D.F. Payne, C.R. Payne, Etna Sherman, Alice Robb, Ruth Cilley, Harriet Sherman, Maude Bigelow, Emily Pierce, Anna H. Lobdell, Mildred W. Lewis, Lillian Lobdell, Margaret Boyle, Norma Bertsch.

Librarians: - Mary Alice Payne, Jennie Alice Hodgkins, Louise M. Stetson, Mabel Whitney, Clara Dunster, Alice L. Hodgkins, Etna Sherman, Mary Dunster, Hilda Hodgkins, Ruth Sherman, Henry Swan (1925-33); Kate Cross, Keeton Lobdell, Elizabeth Dickinson, Mildred W. Lewis, Maude Bigelow, Lillian Lobdell, Mary Bill, Marilyn Lewis, Lorraine Lewis, Dorothy O. Sayre (1957 - 1970)

Looking north into town, new library stands on site formerly occupied by Mills (background, center left). Church at extreme right. Foreground - Cowin home, near former Thomas Hadley brick yard site.



Wadhams Mills Was Busy Place in 1800's

By ETHEL KOZMA

Barnabas Myrick built a forge at Wadhams in 1825, (although there are records of another forge at the Falls as early as 1819).

The next year, 1826, he and Luman Wadhams built their grist mill there, making the place of active prosperity. This grist mill, on the south side of the iron bridge spanning the Bouquet River, served for a century the farmers who brought their grain for grinding. Despite the Flood of April 1909 when the Kingdom Dam went downstream, the grist mill remained a landmark in operation until the fall rains of Sept. 1924 caused the Bouquet to overflow the bridge and also swept away the machinery and interior operations of the old Grist Mill.



With much settlement and activity in the mills, the need to satisfy the religious desires of the folks at the Falls, was realized with the incorporation of the First Congregational and Presbyterian Society Jan. 27, 1827, although records show church memberships being transferred in 1822. It was

in 1837 that the Congregational Church at Wadhams was erected, on the top of the hill just west of the river. In those days it seems to have been almost a rule that the churches should be built on the highest hill-top available, perhaps with an idea of letting their light so shine. However, in the

winter of 1865-66, this church was moved to lower ground, the church members coming together with horses and oxen, and chains and screws and all things needful, and moved the church down the bank, upon the ice, and across to the opposite side, where it now stands (church, left bkgd.)

WADHAMS POWER PLANT

The Wadhams Power Plant was built in 1904, it being owned by D.F. Payne, with first operators being Wm. Stratton on first shift and Henry Bigelow on second shift.

This plant furnished power for Mineville (Witherbee Sherman Iron Ore operations) commencing Oct. 15, 1904. Later houses in Wadhams were wired, and also at Westport. D.F. Payne's store was first wired for electricity, and then Payne's house, Bigelow house, etc. The company was known as "Wadhams and Westport Power & Light Co."

The dam at Wadhams in the Bouquet River was built of wood; then, later of stone and concrete, the water power being used also for operation of saw mills and grist mill. The dam at Lincoln Pond was built of wood two years later, with a four hundred foot fall, where the Wadhams dam was only a 45 ft. fall. Pictures show the construction of Lincoln Pond dam in 1909, with power plants at the Kingdom also. The level of water at Lincoln Pond could also control the amount of water in the Bouquet River at Wadhams Falls.

It was about 1948 that the distribution of electricity was sold from Wadhams Power Plant to the Niagara Mohawk Power Corp., and continued to do so until cessation of operations June 16, 1969 after serving the public 65 years, this plant being one of the



oldest in New York State, which had still been in operation to generate electricity for the public. However, the 300 kw. generator which had been in operation through the years, was struck by lightning June 1, 1966, and put out of operation. The smaller turbine had continued to operate, supplying to Niagara Mohawk.

Jed F. Silley, Mgr. 1919-1944 for Payne Estate
Gordon Bigelow, Sr. was manager of the Power Co. for many years for the Payne Estate, and in 1956 he purchased the entire holdings.

Power was furnished to Mineville from the Kingdom Plant until 1956. In August 1964, Lincoln Pond was sold to the State of New York, this transaction including approx. 600 acres under water,

In spite of the 1909 flood when the Kingdom Dam went down stream, and the more recent breaks in Wadhams dam, necessitating its rebuilding, the Wadhams Power Plant furnished electricity for the area for sixty-five years. (Looking north, the day of the 1909 flood, power plant extreme right; grist mill & iron bridge, left)

Among the Wadhams residents (1970) who have served as operators of this electric supply for many years, are: Spencer and Theodore Johnston, Rupert Miller, Asahel Ferris, Francis Phinney, George Bigelow and Ralph Sherman.

Operations were ceased on June 16, 1969. The Power Plant is the last surviving landmark of the historic industries in the hamlet of Wadhams in the township of Westport, N.Y.



WADHAMS VOLUNTEER FIRE CO.

The Wadhams Volunteer Fire Company conducted an organizational meeting Dec. 21, 1957 as Westport Hose Co. No. 2, as prior to this time, the men had been members of the Westport Co. The Fire House was built in the summer of 1957 with much volunteered building material as well as labor.

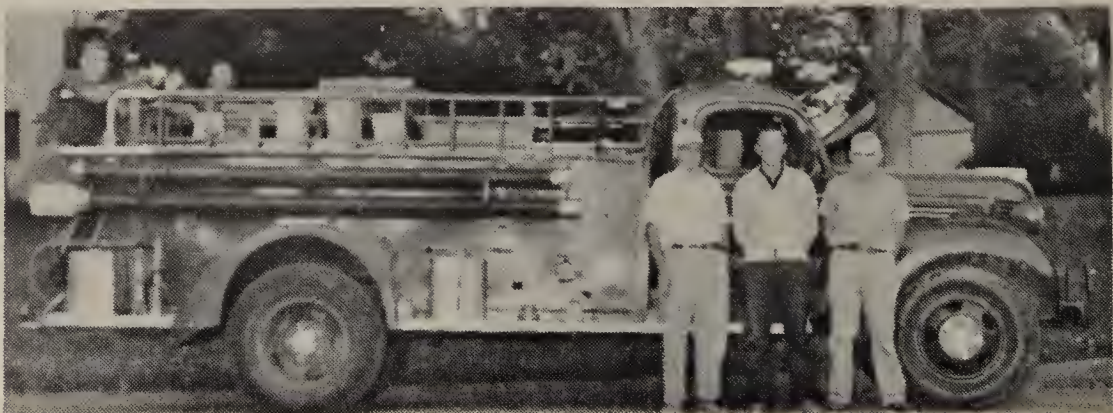
Wilson Lewis was elected the first Fire Captain, with Keeton Lobdell, secretary; Herbert Stafford, First Lieut.; Robert Jerdo, Second Lieut.; and Fred Sayre, Secretary-Treasurer, which position he still maintains. Among other captains, have been Herbert Stafford, Clyde Lambert, Philip Redmond, Joseph Kozma, and Robert Jerdo.

Through a contract Feb. 6, 1962, they became part of the Mutual Aid system, eligible to participate in the Essex Co. Fire Mutual Aid plan which has been of service many times in the coordinated efforts. The actual Incorporation of Wadhams Fire Co. filed 11/23/62 lead to charter 8/23/63 thus becoming independent of Westport Hose Co.



Through Incorporation, the Wadhams Volunteer Fire Co. became eligible for a fire protection contract with the Town of Westport, for which a fee is paid to the Fire Co. Prior to this contract, the Volunteer Co. funds were provided from the annual Thanksgiving Dance, donations, raffles and other fund raising events.

Charter members (24) included: - Herbert Stafford, Philip Redmond, Robert Jerdo, Clyde Lambert, Morris Cowin, Wilson Lewis, Curtis & Keeton Lobdell, Alvin Hyde, Arthur Ryan, Brandon Brant, Carl Merrill, Alden Crandall, Charles Pratt, Edward Decker, Arthur Lewis, Lester Lobdell, George Bigelow, Gilbert Howard, Fred Sayre, Rupert Morse, Joseph Kozma, Sanford Shepardson, Gordon Bigelow, Sr.



WADHAMS RIVERSIDE CEMETERY

Grave markers indicate a cemetery as early as 1825 at the present site. According to the records of the Jan. 1842 church meeting, Levi Pierce, Jason Braman, and Oliver Barrett were named committee to purchase a "buring ground". Essex Co. Deeds Vol. GG, page 220, record the transfer of property from Daniel S. French to Congregational Church, Wadhams Mills, for a public burying ground, dated July 6, 1849, this being the original cemetery on the west side of the street approaching the Methodist Church, as it is known now.

The Wadhams family were buried in a private ground, but were removed and placed in the larger cemetery within a few years. (note the 1876 map)

The organizational meeting of the Riverside Cemetery Association was not called until August 11, 1930, with Mrs. George T. Ladd as first President; Mrs. Carroll Sherman, Vice President until 1940 when succeeded by Mrs. Harriet Woodruff Sherman; Mrs. Scott Phinney, Secretary, succeeded in 1934 by Mrs. Florence Lobdell, and in 1951 by Miss Elsie Sherman; Treasurer, Mrs. Thomas A. Sayre, succeeded in 1956 by Fred B. Sayre, to date. Directors of the first meeting were T.A. Sayre and E.J. Sherman, the latter also being Supt.

The Old Fashioned Barn Dance at Ladd's "Homeport" in 1930 netted \$ 110. to finance the Cemetery Assoc., which was otherwise financed by bequests through the years, aside from the annual barn dance.

Grover Pierce and helpers were the first hired help Sept. 8, 1930 to "Clean our brush", the previous work having been provided by Ellery J. Sherman who sold private lots and maintained same.

Tree Surgeon was hired to save the beautiful elm trees and it was decided to set the American Legion Flag Pole near the gate of Old Cemetery where the G.A.R. had always had their "exercises".

Perpetual care, so-called, was not instituted until Cemetery Assoc. was organized; and in 1950, the fee was raised to \$ 100.

Incorporation of Wadhams Riverside Cemetery was effected June 27, 1934, with 60 members of Assoc. partitioning for the Incorporation.

The original Cemetery consisted of the west side of the street approaching the Methodist Church. The cemetery was later extended to include the Cora Roosevelt Oliver property, adjoining her home. E.J. Sherman sold cemetery lots on the east side of highway between Congregational parsonage and the M.E. Church. Eventually the E.J. Sherman property was transferred to Jared and Ruth Cilley.

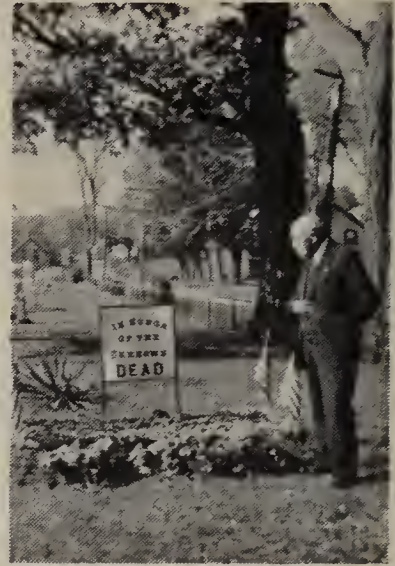
Mrs. Harriet Sherman served as Cemetery Assoc. President 1944-1961 much of the time with the assistance of Mrs. Mary Morhous as Vice-President. Mrs. Asahel Ferris served as President 1961-1969, with Mr. Ferris as caretaker of the property. Upon her death, she was succeeded by Mrs. Clarence Austin as president.

The churches and other organizations joined in the annual Memorial Day services at Wadhams Riverside Cemetery, with 1938 memo listing the following honored dead: -

War of 1812 - Solomon B. Clark, Alexander Walker, Salmon Cooper, Joel French, John Stanton, Benjamin Hardy, Thomas Hadley, Capt. Jason Dunster, Moses Felt, Jesse Braman, General Luman Wadhams.

Veterans of Civil War - Charles Wesley Daniels, Henry A. Southard, Wm. C. Braisted, Austin Braisted, George Wright, Orlando Whitney, George French, Josiah Stratton, Robert Tyler, Darwin A. Buck, Daniel F. Payne, Daniel S. French, Samuel K. Dunster, Chauncey A. Ballou, Oscar A. Phinney, Almon Chappel, Albert Chappel, William Sherman and Abram Sherman.

Albion V. Wadhams, US Navy, and Charles R. Payne, American Legion.



Birdseye view - Wadhams, N.Y.



WADHAMS GRANGE

The first Grange organized in Essex Co. was Bouquette Grange June 1875, meeting at Andrew Mitchell home in Wadhams, N.Y. (farm of Percy Hyde). A year later, the meetings moved to the old Masonic Hall at Whallonsburg, until Grange formerly disbanded 1882.

The Wadhams Mills Grange was organized April 11, 1904 with 33 charter members, R.W. Eggleston being County Deputy. Charter members included: Mr. and Mrs. George Loukes; C.M. Loukes; Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Morhous; Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Lobdell; J.R. Woodruff and Harriet; Mr. and Mrs. E.J. Lobdell; Mr. and Mrs. S.H. Hodgkins; Mr. and Mrs. F. Tomlinson; F.R. Whitney; Gilbert Sherman; Morgan Lobdell; D.M. Johnson; Alice Hodgkins; Mr. and Mrs. A. Farnsworth; E.J. Sherman; Mr. and Mrs. C.M. Sherman; S.E. Phinney; R.N. Lobdell; Mr. and Mrs. Noble Lewis; Mr. and Mrs. Hardy Sherman; Ashley Miller; Mrs. E.K. Hodgkins. In 1905 and in 1906 a basket picnic was held at Ausable Chasm in the horse and buggy days! Mr. Eggleston (Lorrin's father) was also first Master of Essex Co. Pomona Grange organized June 22, 1906.

In the spring of 1909, a Seed Corn Testing Association formed, and a carload of grain was ordered, as were flour and sugar.

In 1911, Wadhams Grange moved from the Church parish hall to the present grange hall, Henry Avery store property being deeded from S.H. Hodgkins to the Grange. Lecturer's programs, spell downs, quartet by Elsie Lewis and Jessica Lewis, E.J. Lobdell and E.J. Sherman sang "Old Fashioned Boiled Dinner", encored with "Those Old Fashioned Dresses"; and public dinners - 25¢ adult ticket.

George French was named Director of the Clinton Co. Patron's Fire Relief Association, when Wadhams Grange organized 1904, and after many years as secretary of a Grange-sponsored insurance, he was succeeded by R.W. Eggleston, and later by Lester Lobdell.

Daylight Saving Time became such a debatable subject 1919-1920, that Wadhams Grange threatened to send a delegate to Legislative Hearing at Albany.

The late 1930s and early '40s, "All Men's Degree Team" was well known for its ritualistic work and drills, as well as the "All Women's Team".

Jan. 1940, Lakeview Grange of Westport surrendered its charter, with many transferring membership to Wadhams Grange. Later, Lewis Grangers also joined the Wadhams fellowship.

Fiftieth anniversary of Wadhams Grange was observed April 1954, with Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Sherman and Mr. Roy Sherman honored for 50 years of active service. Later, in the year, Miss Elsie Sherman and Lorrin Eggleston were so honored. Past Masters serving this order to that time, included: W.H. Lobdell; George K. French; E.J. Lobdell; Scott Phinney; Harley Lobdell; W.H. Whipple; W.J. Lewis; Gretna L. Wilson; Lester Lobdell; C.A. Norton; Harold Pierce; Ira (Jack) Daniels; Gordon Lewis; Ford Anson; Vernon I. Alden; Harold Sayre; Ethel Ferris; Philip Redmond; Howard Parker; John Bill; George Lapine; Irvin Norman; Bernard Baker; Roger Smith; and Ida Sherman (Lakeview). In the past 15 years, the Grange has been guided by Harold Pierce, Allen Pierce, Ford Anson, William Hicks, and Georgianna Anson, as Grange Masters.

During the years, Wadhams Grange has remained true to tradition, interested in legislation, education, farm support, and community service to Rural America.



- OTHER ORGANIZATIONS -

Iroquois Rebekah Lodge was organized May 2, 1922 with fifteen members by initiation and seven by letter.

The Rebekah Lodge remained active for many years, and eventually the Willsboro women joined the local lodge. In 1967, Iroquois Rebekahs disbanded, many of them affiliating with Comet Rebekah Lodge of Crown Point.

Among those honored in leadership (Noble Grand) of the order: Kate Woodruff, Ella Cross, Etna Sherman, Jennie Lewis, Ethel Ferris, Bertha Pierce, Bertha Clark, Alice Robb, Lois Lobdell, Lucy Rand, Ida Hathaway, Betty Dickerson, Lina Sayre, Lucy Sherman, Edith Goff, Augusta Miller, Florence Johnston, Maude Bigelow, Mildred V. Lewis, Kate Plummer, Amy Gough, Hattie Sayre,

Mabel SAYRE

Verna Lydamore, Dorothy O. Sayre, Ruth Talbot, Elsie Lewis, Elaine Knapp, Marjorie Lewis, Margaret McCasland, Molly Bradford, Shirley Bigelow, Venna Cassavaugh, Floy Napper, Dorothy Burch, Elsie Sherman, Rita Ferris, Hilda Sausville, Amy Alden. 1922-1966

Many of the Noble Grands continued in the work by serving as District Deputy President of the Essex District; and Ethel Ferris served on the State Rebekah Assembly.



Deputy's Staff 1958

- - - -

Bouquet Valley Lodge, I.O.O.F. was also active in Wadhams, being organized many years prior to their lady counterparts, the IOOF having negotiated to cooperate with the Grange to purchase the hall several times before 1911. However, both lodges met in the club rooms on second floor of the Grange Hall.

- - - -

Junior Achievement served the boys and girls of Wadhams, J.A. depending on volunteer leadership within the community to train in food, clothing and crafts projects, 1926 - 1940, the youth competing in county demonstrations and exhibits as well as summer camp program at the present Agricultural Extension Bldg. at Westport, which was acquired by Essex Co. 4-H and continued the youth training program initiated by Junior Achievement.

Records show 4-H activity as early as 1941 in Wadhams, but it was not until 1948 that the Three Corner Boys were officially organized, representing the corners of three townships, Lewis, Essex, and Westport, which served Wadhams youth in the French School District area.

The Hi Hat Girls organized 1949, with Mrs. Raymond Pierce as leader, with her home as club headquarters for projects. After 20 years, she continues her volunteered support. The 4-H boys and girls participate in many district and state award trips, the same as Eastern States Exposition for Jr. Ach. youth.

- - - -

Girl and Boy Scouts join the Westport program, although a den of Cubs were active in Wadhams 1957-58 with Evelyn Brant.

Many a Senior Citizen has contributed many a community service to Wadhams, space being limited to give tribute to school teachers, church workers, and scores of others, who have influenced Wadhams livelihood. The 1960 Golden Anniversary couples and the 1895 class at the Old Brick School picture only a few of the pioneers, who dedicated their lives to the quiet village of the Adirondacks.

May this compilation
In some small way

Preserve
Our
Heritage



SCHOOL AT WADHAMS MILLS in the Old Brick School House, about 1895.

Standing, left to right: - Harold St. Peters, Daisy Sherman, Harriet Sherman, Daisy James Taylor, Mary McMahon, Annie Sherman, Anna Arell, Lillian Braham, Amos Dickinson, Frank Betts, Mary Lobdell, Mr. James Rice of Whallonsburg, teacher; Seated, back row: - Thurman Pierce, Ralph Lobdell, Lorrin Eggleston, Charles Cross, Laura Arell, Bessie Braman, Lucy Sayre, Anna McMahon, Hattie Howard, Bessie Sherman, Elsie Sherman, Jason Braman, Clarence Deming. Front row, seated: - Jay Spear, Georgia Glaize, Emma Arell, Anna and Greta Underwood, Harry Ring, Arthur Betts, John Cross, Richard Woodruff, Henry Cross, Mabel Howard, John McGovern, George Betts, Charles and Harley Lobdell.



1960 Golden Anniversary

Standing, left to right: Gilbert and Harriet Sherman; Grover and Lizzie Pierce; Theodore and Florence Johnston; Vernon and Amy Gough; Leonard and Frances Plummer; Thomas and Ida Sherman.

Seated, left to right: Samuel and Lina Sayre; Wilburn and Catherine Isenhower; Vernon and Alma Alden.

